12

581 It was not felt necessary to marry. Because of the strong
589 economic position of women, a few spinsters had their own homes, farmed their own lands, enlisting nephews and nieces to help, or hiring as needed, and entered fully into the social life of the area. Others lived with relatives and assisted in the maintenance of a larger household unit. Some men, too, never married.
• [593] One group of grown siblings of both sexes stated they were "too happy together to marry."

836 Pre-marital chastity was more or less observed. If a girl became pregnant before marriage, her parents brought pressure,
848 usually successful, on the boy to marry her. The occasional illegitimate child was raised without stigma in the girl's family, though problems arose during pregnancy and delivery (cf. "cone of wood" below). The mother later found a husband. One father was angered because he felt his daughter's pregnancy wrecked her chances for a marriage of prestige. He was conspicuous for his social aspirations towards city ways.

864 Information on human sexual matters was gathered by the
831 young sometimes by accidental observation of parents and others, through hints from hearing cursing, and by conversations with grandparents, older siblings, and friends of the same sex. Men joked on sex matters at the all-male rice-uprooting parties. Being antithetic to the ascetic prescriptions of Buddhism, sex talk was highly charged. Sex was never discussed in mixed company.

Residence

592 The nuclear family of husband, wife, and unmarried children was the primary social and productive unit, but other resident kinship units larger and smaller also occurred. After marriage,
[591] the couple usually lived for a time in the house of the parents of one spouse or the other; then, as soon as they could afford it, set up housekeeping in their own house. Of a sample of 96 families in Bang Chan, 30 set up independent households at once after marriage, 16 after one year, and the rest, a few per year, on throughout 10 years; 15 of the families never had a house of their own but lived with other relatives (Janlekha:37). Of 298 families, 59.4 per cent lived independently as a nuclear family, while 34.9 per cent lived with other relatives in the house. (The remaining were single persons living alone, or priests at the temple in the "ecclesiastical family.") The average size of the households (not necessarily the nuclear families) was 5.7 persons, with a range of 1 to 14, the median
361 being 6 (ibid. 28-29). The house of a new couple was usually built adjacent to parents or relatives, and certainly within
621 calling distance or sight of some other household. Social patterns of cooperative work, borrowing, and visiting kept adjacent households, whether kin, co-religionists or not, in

close touch with each other's activities and needs.

These residence arrangements had considerable bearing on the amount of help at hand for a pregnant, parturient, or lactating woman, especially since every woman expected to bear her child at home. A woman's first child was often born while she was still resident in the house of her parents or parents-in-law. If the separate household had been set up, and especially if there were other small children, a parturient's mother or other relative came to stay with her for delivery and post-delivery care, or a woman might return to her parental or her husband's home for the event. In fact, since husbands and wives were both needed in the fields, it took great diligence for a woman, without extra kinfolk in the house, to carry on child-care, cooking, and field-work, and then undergo child-bearing besides. The extensive overlap in the division of labor (Sharp et al. 1953:94-98), though, resulted in much sharing by husbands in the household chores, so that the burdens were somewhat eased. Help in child-birth was one of the areas of mutual aid freely accorded by neighbors, so all women could count on adequate or even ample help at this time.

Wealth Differences:

Way of Life

Real polarities of wealth existed. A well-to-do person owned rice fields, a good house, and had many devoted kinsmen. Teachers who were governmental civil servants and a few of the traders were somewhat better off because they had regular sources of cash. A poor man, owning no land, lived humbly and hired out at day labor and other odd jobs. Yet the way of life of the well-to-do was not very different from that of the poor. Practically all persons worked in the fields or at related activities, wore the same cotton clothes, and ate the same food. Rice was plentiful. Fish, fruit, vegetables, and fuel could be amply obtained practically without cost, though it was also possible to spend money on these. Yet here and there persons were beginning to lose their old satisfaction in life as a farmer. Changes were beginning to come in, heralded by such things as hair permanently waved, gasoline pressure-lamps, increased geographical and political awareness, grumbling over the cost of living, and frustration over rising expectations. Urban life as met with in Bangkok was viewed with some awe as a glittering universe with different ideas and needs, yet also with some uneasiness. The city dwellers sometimes looked down on the country dwellers and made them feel uncomfortable.

Within the community all women received about the same service. Though the poor felt the 20 to 30 baht cost[5] of a midwife was too expensive, and so utilized the free help of a compassionate kinsman (usually the mother) or neighbor, the latter sometimes were as expert manually as a midwife or even on their way to becoming one. The few critical cases, rich or poor, who were taken to the Minburi Health Center managed to pay the 50 to 70 baht fee (120 baht if penicillin were used).

General Attitudes Towards Having Children

In these farm families, children were an asset, for their help, skills, and earnings enriched the family. Boys and girls were equally desired. A girl did household chores and at her marriage brought in the considerable payment of "milk money." A boy could be ordained and so "bring merit" to his parents. Both could farm, and both would provide cherishing care to the parents in their old age, but this was expected particularly of daughters. A child usually arrived within a year or so of marriage, to the rejoicing of everyone. Until the birth of a child, marriage only partially changed the young couple's status, especially if they were still living under the parental roof. With children they became the heads of a family, with authority over, and responsibility for, a younger generation. In the few polygynous households, the position of a younger wife was enhanced when she bore a child. Sometimes on the birth of this or another child, the money paid to the bride's parents at the time of the wedding was turned over to the new mother. Title to some of the familial land, never given until a marriage had proved stable, might be conveyed to one spouse or the other. The arrival of a child was sometimes a signal for preparations for moving out and establishing an independent household, or for establishing a "second kitchen," i.e. two separate families living under a single roof. A study of the birth-rituals (Chap. V) gives evidence that the arrival of a child, especially the first, was of deep psychological and social significance to the parents. The marriage bonds were strengthened if the first-born were male (cf. p. 65). A couple without children was "sad" and "a little less rich." Barrenness was caused by lack of merit.

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5. Analysis of Janlekha's figures, borne out in observation, shows that per capita income was low, that there were many poor people, and because of the seasonal nature of income, even the rich were short of cash (1955:135-143). Ninety-two baht were the average "expenses for medicine" including delivery fees (1955:147).

Chapter V

BIRTH CUSTOMS: THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

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Physiological ideas clarify only part of DÛan's tale. To illuminate other underlying tenets, we begin with the idea of help.

Help

[812]

In "Influences on Health" (p.27) it was pointed out that Bang Chan conceived of individuals as unique beings, each with his fate in his own hands, with no bonds nor responsibilities to any other being. In an earthly existence, though, it would be difficult to obtain satisfaction or even life itself under such separatist terms. What relationship was possible between such autonomous beings? How in fact was rebirth brought about? Help (chûai) was the fundamental principle for organizing social interaction. Without help, the villagers saw existence not only as lonely and ineffective but even unrealizable. With it, personal and mutual goals were achieved, and life was enriched. People were "independent agents serving each other because it is mutually beneficial" (Phillips:63).

Responsibility for initiating help lay formally with persons of greater age or higher status. Elders assisted juniors, government officials assisted peasants. They received in return gratitude, obedience, and respect. Parents received care in their old age from the children they had nurtured. In the ordinary walk of life, particularly in a household, though, aid took the form of a continuous give and take with associates. The view of help as the mainspring of social action cut through many a problem of initiating aid or waiting on another to act, for fundamentally, on the cosmic scene, all beings were equally old. The child who helped most by giving over his earnings was loved most by his parents (Phillips:69); when married, children helped their parents less than before marriage, still less if they cooked in separate kitchens in the same house, and much less when they moved to a separate house, for their time and cash went increasingly to maximize their own interests.

[593]

retreat (ōk phansā) in order that her child would come out (ōk) more easily. Here none sought to divide the worlds of the natural and the supernatural, or to mark off "imitative magic" from the "learning by example of the natural world." A stronger influence came from more powerful agents, so that the effects of the Buddhist temple carried greater effect than the actions of a mere neighbor. Yet any like influence was of aid, especially in a verbal similarity. Thus, an event occurring on a Friday was apt to be auspicious because the Thai name for Friday contains an element identical in sound (though etymologically different) to the word for happiness (wansuk= Friday; suk=happiness), and for the fortunate status of true adulthood (suk=mature, ripe).

Stability in a Floating World

In explaining why some children were "born easily and were easy to raise" (liang ngāi) certain persons simply said, "They were born into the right family. Those born to the wrong family usually die." In defining the "right" family, merit, habituation, and helpfulness converge.

Most families were thought to live together as a group in life after life. In view of the separateness of souls, how was this brought about? The key lay in the conviction that people who made merit together met in future lives. Since most merit-making was undertaken as an enterprise of the nuclear family, sometimes with close kinsmen and friends, they would find each other. Some of the eagerness of friends to help (chuāi ngān) with cash or labor was in order to meet in later lives. These persons were used to each other, used to helping each other, and so might marry. Thus, if they lived rightly, the nuclear family, maybe with an infusion of beloved old friends, expected to carry on in the next existence. Although a family's prosperity proved its merit, and its wealth facilitated making more merit, continuity in time was not limited to the wealthy. Proof that a couple had been married in a previous life lay in the birth of a boy as first born. Such a couple was known as a "khū" (pair), and divorce was held to be highly unlikely.

How did a child find its "right" family? After whatever necessary stay in purgatory, the khwan soul of a deceased member roosted in a tree near to its old home, then flew into an accustomed womb. One recalls the start of the blessing (p.48), "Come, khwan! Come my own child!" A woman hoped that the khwan was one previously born to her. "A couple lost its first child. Later the wife was fearing for the life of their sickly second-born." The husband said, "It is according to your sin and merit. If the child is your own child, he will live with you. If not, he cannot."

761 Since only meritorious children were born into the
775 "right family," they were helpful and so easy to raise. The
• 593 easiest to raise were reincarnations of babies deceased in
829 the mother's present life. "A girl of three died. Her father
782 dreamed he was at her coffin. She asked for water which he gave her, then brought her home. Months later a boy was born, so easily raised up that people knew it was a reincarnation of that girl." Here amiability and the change to male sex demonstrated merit. In another tale, "a woman lost many babies at birth. Her husband, thinking it was the same child trying to be born to that mother, marked the forehead of the last deceased baby. His surmise proved correct, because the next baby born had this mark on its forehead."

This assumption that a woman's children were born to her over and over led to a measure of control over the cooperativeness of the child in the womb. A child trained to "good habits" became a meritorious adult who, when reborn, would of course "help" his mother in childbirth. It was advisable to set one's own child into paths of proper behavior, for he could be born again to a descendent, and in all likelihood to oneself.

On the other hand, families were not closed groups. "Like a leech that sticks in one place, then goes to stick somewhere else, so a deceased person may be reborn somewhere else," said a priest. The marriage blessing stated, "May angels, not criminals or beggars, reincarnate as your children." Thus was explained why upright parents might have a disobedient, roaming child. He had roamed into a new family which perhaps he had met during a pleasant casual visit to them in another life. If he did not stay home to make merit with his present family, a wayward child would roam out of it as easily as he came in. Here was the ultimate danger in visiting around too much.

761 Because all individuals lacking in merit died off at
593 birth, some of whom because they got into the wrong family,
782 a selective process continuously weeded out the extremely non-meritorious so that those who were born usually survived. In fact, Hauck's figure of 90.6 live-births [163] (1956:33), the percentage of total pregnancies shows how many meritorious babies were born to the right family!

852 The Winnowing Ceremony
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This ceremony, described in Dũan's tale, was usually performed shortly after delivery, though it might occur anytime during the first three days of a baby's life. The child, placed on the tray (twins were laid together or separately) was claimed by the mother or the father, who

852 after whoever claimed him, a mother might ask a "wealthy
856 person, of polite, calm, and good character" to do this.
789 The baby also started an association with whatever items were placed on his tray with him. Besides the most common ones mentioned in Dûan's tale were ink and books (which induced learning); gold, rings, jewelry, money (wealth); bergamot thorn, a tin of kaffir lime (sharp wit); and a razor (a good wood-cutter for the fire; said to be a Muslim
852 custom). When the baby was finally transferred from tray
789 to cradle these items were returned to household use. The bamboo cutter, rhizome of phlai, and earth associated with cutting the cord were taken off the tray and buried with the placenta. Their significance lay as part of a binding ritual. The phlai and earth might be taken off ahead of time.

Binding Rituals

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774 Because Bang Chan accorded autonomy to every individual, whatever his age, everyone had the free choice to go wherever his advantage lay. In infancy and childhood, the khwan soul might flee at any time, and could only be re-
[852 captured by a khwan-calling or khwan-leading rite (Textor: 396-411). After about the age of 8, a thaem khwan ceremony helped to bind in and strengthen the khwan soul. In daily life, the fear that a loved one, whatever his age, would withdraw or run away if unhappy, frightened, or over-
829 burdened dogged people their whole lives. Casual episodes
• 593 were sometimes viewed with alarm. Once a boy of 10 on his own initiative went off to live a few days with his grandmother only 10 minutes away by boat. His mother complained that he had wandered (pai thiaw) and feared it would become a habit. Parents dreaded that grown children would find work away from the village; that daughters would elope; that adopted children or spouses run away; or even that their child, at marriage, would elect to go live with his in-laws. At any time a husband might go into the priesthood leaving his wife and children to fend for themselves, though here the wife had to give her permission and the motive was sympathetically viewed.

A traditional jesting threat was to "go away to the jungle-forest" (pai pâ).

The economic and social base for this fear of losing a child to the world was that children were a parental investment with an anticipated return: for the trouble of bearing and raising them, children should work for the family until their marriage. Furthermore, a boy was to bring his parents merit by being ordained, while a girl was to care for them in their old age. If a child moved away

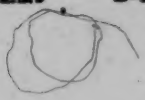
before completing these obligations, the parents lost out on their anticipated reward (cf. L.M. Hanks, 1962).

Since waywardness (pai thiaw) was considered a continuous threat, magical means were taken at the moment of birth to ensure that a child stay close to the family that raised him. The blessing following the winnowing ceremony invoked immovable things: the post, the cat that traditionally never roamed far, the pumpkin that sat and fattened:

> "...Stay at home like the bottom of the house post. Watch the house like a cat. Eat and stay here! Never leave home. Be fat and heavy as the ash pumpkin..."

The most important binding actions utilized, or brought the child into physical contact with, objects long associated with family, in particular the house and land. The umbilical cord was cut on earth or phlai dug from the house-land itself with a bamboo "knife" sliced from one of the deeply sunk house posts. Of these "the knife is the important thing." The phlai also had medicinal purposes. With a feather "from the mother's house" the baby's navel was smeared with cobwebs from a spider whose web indicated long undisturbed residence. They buried the placenta either under some large old tree that stood near the house, or under the house stair. The old family winnowing tray, old clothes, and well-used family possessions were used first before any new furnishings were purchased for the baby. A fire of sakae wood grown on premises boiled the water for the baby and mother, and heated the mother. Sakae "was planted when a house was first built so that every generation of occupants would have it available for use at confinement" and also for firewood at other times (cf. McF. 834). All these binding rites assured that the child being rooted to a home terrain, would not wander frightened, and so "would not cry." He also would be at home to participate in the merit-making that would reconstitute the family in another existence.

If a child were born away from home, how was this bond to his locality established? On one to two occasions when the child was born at the Minburi Health Center, Hauck (notes, 1954) observed a solution to this dilemma. The mothers returned home, as was customary, within a few hours of delivery and were established by their respective fires. Their babies were winnowed and laid on their trays with the usual auspicious book, pencil, and needle. Neither tray held any bamboo, clod, nor phlai, however, for these had not been used. On one tray, though, was laid a steel knife from the kitchen, mute proof that a family cutting instrument ought to be there. On another occasion, a father asked to be given his child's placenta so as to bury it on the house site. In so far as possible, people in Bang Chan tried to carry on the old rites.



000 in Bang Chan tried to carry on the old rites.

848 372 The Cone of Wood

When a child was conceived out of wedlock, the first problem raised was, "Who will build the wood pile?" The actual father had to come forward and identify himself, for he and no one else could perform this duty. A child could not be born without the father giving this assistance.

a 593 84 789 372 This cone of wood represented a "womb" towards which a father actively played out his role. His child was in it. While building it, his behavior affected the child, just as his wife's behavior acted on the child in her womb. If the pile were incomplete before the onset of labor or gave out before the fire-rest was terminated, the child would "never finish any task in its life." The very manifestation of industriousness involved in collecting the wood, though, made the unborn child industrious. Gathering a quantity of wood for this big pile was not easy. Old houses had plenty of wood, for they stood in thick groves, but new houses sometimes stood bare and stark in the fields. He placed spiny Indian jujube or Chinese date (phutsā) and Manila tamarind (ma khām thē?) all over the outside to protect [824] this "womb" from invasion by malevolent spirits. Thus he also protected his wife's womb. Sakaē wood was preferred because it was smokeless. Collecting a mixture of woods was easier, but then the fire smoked. Mixed or all sakaē, whichever the constitution of the pile for a woman's first confinement set the pattern for all her later ones.

At the onset of labor, the father had to open the way for his child to come out of the womb, so the pile was tipped over in a direction paralleling the position of the Great Snake. This astrological orientation was exactly that of the woman in labor. Unless the mother's head and the apex of the fallen wood pile coincided with the direction of the head of the Snake, with the open end of womb and cone below, "with and not against the lie of the snake's scales," the child would have to struggle against these scales as he came out. By tipping the cone of wood properly the father helped his child to an easy exit.

The thorns protected the womb and the baby inside from all evil spirits during the months of pregnancy. With the onset of labor, the holy cord which surrounded the mother took over this function, and kept away such dangerous spirits as phī krasū and, if the baby died at birth, the violent New Baby Ghost (cf. Textor:261).

562 delivery, "her blood was purified to a white color to become
[827] the milk of the breast."[48] Nursing a child was the essence
[853] of a woman's function, the supremely feminine act. A priest said, "A mother mercifully receives the khwan into her womb, and for maintaining life gives more of her own body, strength, and care (i.e. than does the father). Mothers are born to love children. Theirs is a steady intent to provide children with successful existences. To a mother one is most grateful" (S.S.).

562 In a wider context, not only all their household members
462 but people anywhere were the objects of women's nurture:
252 women were in charge of the cooking even if occasionally
264 helped by men. At the meals they prepared they were often the last to eat, so often "holding back and eating whatever was left over," that in a poor houshold, short rationing daily was probable (Hauck, et al.:35,49). One old lady expressed deep satisfaction that she "did not feel hungry
[082] any more." She construed this as proof that she had ample
[431] merit, but it also meant that she was a great donor who gave
[796] continuously and took little. Women usually offered the early morning food to priests in behalf of the family, and they took charge of cooking the immense amount of food served at large ceremonies and temple festivities. When
• 593 age pushed women past their mature capacities, they returned
888 to the status of recipients. A son said of his senile mother, "She has gone back to being a child" (klap pai pen dek). The son's wife cooked delicacies for her.

562 A desire to give tender care and nourishment was deemed
857 inborn in all women. Although sex was not strongly
[291] differentiated in babyhood,[49] by age 3 a hard-to-handle
[593] skirt was put on a tiny girl, who reacted with vast pride. By 5, girls were helping with cooking and baby tending. Often has an older sister of 9 or 12 been observed patiently feeding her charge the ice cream she longed to eat herself.

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[822] 48. This very phrase was congruent with the colors associated with the khwan. Red or white flags, or pieces of cloth, or puddings (khanom) were required wherever khwan were involved, such as in rice, san phra phūm, and tham khwan ceremonies. Red was an auspicious color, white symbolized innocence and purity.

[856] 49. Anuman Rajadhon reports, though, that at the moment of birth, the child's sex was immediately "adjusted" (Anuman Rajadhon:127).

Only when the youngster was satiated did she gobble the remainder.[50] Parents often commented that girls in general were obedient and good, but boys were not. Everyone spoke, however, of exceptions. The capacity to play the female role grew with the child. It was not completed with the physiological maturity of first menstruation but only with ritual maturity.

The rituals to fit a woman for her office, described as "directly related to the welfare of the child," had 4 specific purposes. They perfected her as a compassionate being; restored and strengthened her body; improved her capacities as a nourisher; and strengthened her own khwan. The key to each of these aims was the holy fire.[51] Because actions taken by the fire were immediately and permanently effective, every effort was made to induce auspicious happenings. Words spoken by the fire had compelling effect so even ordinary speech became magical. Speaking of the fire's hotness so raised its heat that a mother was burned. For this reason, uninformed or careless visitors like children or foreigners were a danger.

According to Buddhist thinking, suffering developed compassion. Through the discomfort of pregnancy, followed by the anguish of childbirth and the heat of the fire, a woman became compassionate and so achieved the guide-line for moral behavior. Then a woman was sure to be touched with pity for the younger or less fortunate. One teacher despite the inconvenience went home twice a day from school to nurse her new baby because she "pitied" him too much to hire a wet-nurse. It was "pitiful" to see a child at another woman's breast for it implied that its mother was either unwilling or unable to nurse it. Thus, babies were rarely nursed by others than their own mothers.

The fire also strengthened a woman by ridding her of bad blood and foul fluids. Wind and fire, the 2 spirit guardians of the elements necessary to the occasion, were invoked to assist in the drying of the uterus. In addition, strengthening

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50. Boys too fed their younger siblings but their purpose was a power-play: "to assure obedience in the future" (cf. Hanks and Phillips:648).

51. This fire was kept entirely separate from the one for cooking and boiling of water. It was ritually lit and ritually extinguished at the end of the fire-rest.

562 789 [754] [787] love philters, and they might be "sealed up" in childbirth or attacked by khun, their capacities to "liang" were inalienable. If any woman tried to temper with man's magic, a severe sanction fell on her. She became the host of the phī krasū who lived from faeces like a dog.[59] On the other hand in a legendary case a man who tried to perform one of the women's rites to the Rice Mother was destroyed.[60] Furthermore, the Buddhist sanction of sinfulness fell on any man using magic for evil purposes.

562 791 [755] [793] The single channel where women might operate in the men's field of curing, power, clairvoyance, etc. was as a medium (khon song), through possession by a spirit. If possessed by a male mō, she could do everything a mō could do. Men were never mediums. Bang Chan's only medium was possessed by a male mō.[61] During seances she talked and sat like a man, and gave out cures and advice to an eager clientele. Only while wearing the yellow robe of an ordained priest did a man enjoy a generalized eufunction comparable to a woman's nurturing capacity. His powers in many respects were far greater than hers, but limited in her speical province.

[832] [156] [688] [626] [593] ---

59 My finding is based on Textor's interesting facts (pp. 305-330). He described the hosts of phī krasū as married women ("never a maiden"), in their 30's or 40's, who were "invariably" trying to learn love magic. Such women were, however, violating their sexual function as nurturant and worse, their status as "suk" women, ritually established by the holy fire! Ostracism by the community, implemented by fear of contagion through spittle, lasted even unto the deathbed. The phī krasū's daughter alone was immune while giving the devoted care which was every mother's due in her old age, for Bang Chan desired no alienation of this filial duty even out of fear of the terrible sanction on the mother.

[539] [776] 60. The legend ran that once a man instead of a woman went into the rice field to perform the ritual inviting of the Rice Goddess to stay there and be cared for with food and offerings during her pregnancy. The goddess he met was not an immature and tender child-like spirit, but the adult, pregnant being who was powerful, flirtatious, and frightening. Dazzled by her beauty he fell in love with her, and ran away with her, vanishing forever. The goddess, affronted because an improper person arrived to deal with her, destroyed him.

[825] [787] 61. In Bangkok, monkey, cats, or spirits may also possess women.

Chapter VI

MIDWIFE AND [illegible]

759 In Bang Chan it was easy to ask, "Who has delivered babies?" The answer would run into dozens of names. To respond to "Who are the midwives?" an informant would give the names of 6 or 8 persons, then add, "Some people call them professional midwives but some do not. X is not a midwife but she knows how. Y delivers babies, but only out of pity. Z has delivered 38 babies or more, but she is not a midwife." If asked, "Are there doctors among those who deliver babies? " he would say, "[illegible] (doctors) never deliver babies."

Before a definition of a midwife is given, a general picture of midwifery in Bang Chan is needed.

844 The Practice of Midwifery

Normal childbirth, a cooperative venture between mother and child, was not an illness. It called only for the help of kin or neighbors. Anyone who had seen or experienced childbirth at least once before was considered a possible, though not necessarily competent, "deliverer" of a child. [593] The husband was supposed to be present to assist; failing whom a father or brother should attend. Consequently a good many men had witnessed birth. The spectacle was disliked, however. Anyone, though, young or old, male or female, kin or not, might offer or be asked to help. Private magic was [579] not essential, though it was necessary for someone with incense, flowers, and a candle in hand to inform (บอก), the Lord Buddha, the ancestors, and the ordinary protective spirits of the land and home and so enlist their help. The customary post-partum rituals and blessings were not esoteric. Enough popular astrological knowledge was known, or quickly and freely available from a priest at the temple, to orient the woman in labor. Consequently, many a woman was delivered by her mother or other kin. One poor farmer and masseur, with the assistance of his sister, delivered all [759] but one of his own children. On another occasion, a visiting kinsman, by chance a medical orderly in the Royal Thai Navy, safely delivered a relative. In all these cases the cost or "gift" was less, or non-existent, and the convenience

252 cooking water was discarded. In Bang Chan, foods were not usually cooked a long time.

In most village homes, one fire only was built for ordinary meal preparation. Rice was cooked first, then "with-rice" dishes, no attempt being made to serve the rice and accompanying foods hot. Indeed, with the frequent use of chilies, one might have the sensation of eating hot foods, no matter when they were taken from the fire. Notes on the preparation of a meal in one household that participated in the dietary study, are included in Appendix C, p. 119.

Meal Service and Techniques of Eating

264 Food was generally served in the kitchen area. When possible, family members ate together at the evening meal, sitting on the floor, each one old enough to feed himself having a bowl of rice before him. The "with-rice" dishes were placed in the center of the group. Family members helped themselves to portions of the "with-rice," using the right hand to take solid foods, and a serving spoon for fluid foods. Enough rice for a bite was pressed together with the fingers of the right hand, so that grains would not be scattered as the rice was conveyed to the mouth. "With-rice" of semi-fluid consistency was eaten by dipping the ball of rice into it, or more exactly, touching one side of the ball of rice to it. The amount of "with-rice" was generally small, and to take more than one spoonful onto the plate at a time would appear greedy.

264 When families did not sit down to eat together, those
593 who ate first were expected to take no more than their share. The wife saw to it that her husband had a liberal serving of the best food available. She also gave generously to the children, holding back, eating last or what was left, herself. In a well-to-do household, where food was ample, the mother would be as well fed as others; in a poor household she might be short-rationed day after day.

When priorities in serving were observed,[1] young children, "not old enough to know better" were not expected to wait until the elders had been served. A frequent pattern at both breakfast and dinner was for older children to feed the younger ones before their own meal; elders in the family then ate, and husband and wife ate together if possible, or as convenient to their separate schedules. In the morning if food was to be offered to priests, family members did not ordinarily eat until after the priests had been served. If necessary, however, the priests' food could be served onto a tray, then others might eat. The observer often had

1. See footnote 1, p. 49.

Notes on Meal Service

In a Relatively Prosperous Household

Friday, May 22, 1953

Before breakfast is served, the six-year old girl comes with a piece of jack fruit. SS weighs it and tells her to bring back what she does not eat. Later she comes with hands full of stones (14 of them). She has eaten this much as a "snack" before the regular meal. The grandmother finishes the piece (7 stones) and gives the rind to SS to weigh.

At breakfast the family sits in a circle on the kitchen floor. Each person except the baby has his own bowl of rice before him. In the center of the circle, within reach of all, are four small dishes of "with-rice" which has been prepared for breakfast: sour curry of buffalo meat, curry of (3)khii-(2)leg leaves, bean sprouts and one small fried fish. The mother takes a very small bit of fish on a spoon with rice, and feeds baby. During breakfast baby has 6 bites of rice with fish, nine small spoonfuls of rice with sour curry. The mother herself eats one bite of fish. She takes four spoonfuls of sour curry on plate with rice. This is shared with baby. Mother and baby eat mainly rice, fish and sour curry of buffalo meat, whereas grandmother and the six-year old girl have curry of (3)khii-(2)leg leaves and bean sprouts with their rice.

In a Relatively Poor Household

Wednesday, May 27, 1953

While the mother finishes the meal preparation, the seven-year old girl feeds the baby, first rice with some chopped egg, then rice with the "water" from the egg. The mother remarks that she cannot cook unless someone looks after the baby.

Technique of eating -- A tray with the "with-rice" is set out, also a bowl with water, for rinsing the hand, and a basin or bowl with drinking water. There are spoons in the "with-rice," but these seem to be used for taking some of the juice, which may be eaten directly or put on the individual's bowl of rice. Solid pieces are taken from the serving dish by hand, and mixed with some of the rice, which is then picked up in the right hand. Occasionally the person eating will rinse his hand with water. When finished, each person rinses his bowl (using either water from the bowl nearby, or from the general supply -- in this case the canal). Dishes are turned upside down on the platform near the stove, to dry.

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596 182 586 [578] [576] the villagers is contrasted with those cases of separation or divorce which are viewed as resulting more from social psychological reasons: arguments, contrariness, general incompatability, and wasting or not sharing money. The squandering of money is a most frequent cause of family discord contributing to family dissolution, especially when it involves the three aphoristic evils of Thai life: women, whiskey, and opium (although, in fact, I know of only two cases where Bang Chaners have been reputed to smoke opium).

586 595 Precise figures on the divorce or separation rate in Bang Chan are unknown, primarily because many marriages as well as divorces are never registered on the government rolls; also, many separations seem to follow an on-again-off-again pattern; the sanctioned occurrence of polygyny (only eight known cases out of the 296 families) and even polyandry (two known cases) complicates the problem even further. However, the fact that *four months* after I had designated a sample of thirty families from which to select informants, six of those families, or 20 percent of the sample population, had dissolved would strongly suggest that Bang Chan families are not particularly stable. [581]

• 593 586 183 The causes of family fission in these specific cases are unknown, but what is impressive is the apparent ease with which it takes place and the equanimity with which people seem to accept it. Other informants, reporting their own experiences or observations, discuss family breakups as if they were among the more normal events of the workaday world and completely understandable. They seem to be of no greater emotional import—in the sense of eliciting recognizable feelings of distress—than losing a good price on the sale of a piece of land or on the sale of some rice. In fact, the latter kinds of situations are considerably more likely to evoke expressions of hurt or exasperation. One repeatedly encounters in Bang Chan instances on the following order: a family breaks up simply because the husband has an inclination to work for a particular person whom he likes; a wife ("she is a touchy woman") runs away every time she has a minor disagreement with her husband (minor even by village standards, for example, "Should I buy my lottery tickets from Mr. X or Mr. Y?"; "Should we invite seven monks or ten monks to officiate at this ceremony?"). The point here is that these explanations—and the low tolerance for discord, the importance to a person of a boss or job over a spouse, the desire to be footloose, which they imply—are to the villagers completely reasonable justifications for the dissolution of family units.

174 594 596 Many of the family relationships referred to above as "centripetal" in nature are clearly related to or derived from patterns of social organization characteristic of an earlier Bang Chan. Although most evidence indicates that even in the years immediately following the settlement of the village in

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As the reader might by now suspect, it is not easy to determine the basis of the unity of the family. However, of all the factors that keep people living together in amity and affection, two come to the fore: a sense of love, obligation, and respect that is derived from the simple fact of kinship, but which must be continuously confirmed by mutual benefits; and economic considerations.

The economic foundation of the family is significant not only because the family is in fact the sole economic and occupational unit in the community (with the exception of the monkhood and school) but because the villagers themselves think of the family in terms of its economic functions. People say that they marry for wealth or because of the productive capacities of their spouses;[10] spouses stay together because the economic costs of a split are too great; most important of all, people are keenly *aware* of their economic interdependence. Fathers say that they need children to work in the fields and care for the buffalos, that a family needs a mother so that its members will be fed, that siblings are useful because it is easy to borrow from them (although, as noted earlier, some are unhappy about the intrusion of the kinship tie into what they regard to be a commercial transaction). Many villagers extend this economic, transactional type of thinking to other aspects of the kinship relationship. Thus they say that "the purpose of marriage is to have a companion who will take care of you when you get sick," or very frequently that "my parents went to the trouble of bringing me up so they would have a person to make merit for them when they die." The emphasis here is on independent agents serving each other because it is mutually beneficial.

The love and affection that people feel for each other is of course grounded in the close associations that one finds in most nuclear families. However, the attitudes of respect that one sees are perhaps more distinctively Thai. Almost all the literature on Thailand refers, at one point or another, to the patterns of respect (*khwaamnabthyy*) existing between people, both within and without the family. These patterns are based, in the first instance, on the status inequalities that exist in almost all social

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[10] In responding to the unstructured Sentence Completion Test item, "*He* (*she*) *wants to get a wife* (*husband*) who. . . ," for example, thirty-one of sixty informants indicated that they wanted a mate who "was a good worker," "earned a living," "was rich," or otherwise had high socio-economic status. Only two persons said that they wanted a spouse for reasons that could be reasonably defined as sentimental: one woman wanted a husband who "would be a good friend with whom she could discuss things," and a man said he wanted a wife whom "he loved." Other informants gave completions distributed among a variety of categories: "polite, well-mannered, handsome, kind, strong, and good" spouses; and six women wanted husbands who would be faithful.

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relationships: within the family, usually in terms of the relative ages of people; elsewhere, in terms of age, wealth, power, knowledge, religious or governmental role. Secondly, they are based on the assumption that every individual, regardless of his position in the hierarchy, deserves respect. The first is a respect associated with the proper performance of one's role; the second, a recognition of the essential dignity of every human being.

The role of these respect patterns cannot be emphasized enough. Benedict, in her study (1946) of Thai culture at a distance, referred to the learning of the *wai*, or gesture of obeisance, as "the first teaching the child receives." Although the *wai* is perhaps not the very first social act the child learns, I have seen infants no more than two weeks old being guided by the mother in raising the palms of their little hands to the forehead in expression of deference to superiors. The older infant who can do this on his own almost always receives acknowledgments of approval and delight from the adults in attendance. An older sibling really means it when he says of his relationship with his younger brothers, "when I ask them to do some kind of work, they go and do it. They never disobey, and when there is no disobedience, there is no hatred. . . . Formerly, whenever there was entertainment somewhere I took them with me. My younger siblings love me a lot. . . ." His position in the authority structure assumes the respect of those younger than he, and they willingly grant it for, among other things, he plays his role well as the kindly superior who takes them with him whenever there is entertainment. All the polite little linguistic forms (honorifics, expletives suggesting status and, most important, ordinary kinship terminology with its specification of relative age) as well as kinesthetic forms (lowering the body while passing a seated older person, holding the younger between one's legs and with arms around him in a position of protection) also serve to emphasize the respect that people grant one another because of their differential status. Perhaps the most revealing illustration of the strength of these patterns, at least the authority pattern, was provided by a two-year-old toddler who pointed to the stomach of his pregnant mother and said with pride, "My younger sibling is in there. When he is born he will be *my* responsibility." Little doubt that when the child is born he will give his older brother his due.

With regard to the other respect form, recognizing the dignity of every human being, more than once I have heard parents say that they disliked giving their child a certain medicine "because it offends the baby; he does not like it. It is better not to give it to him than to hurt his feelings." Although I do not doubt that in some instances the parents were annoyed more by the screams of the child than anything else, I am also convinced that for the most part they were respecting his basic individuality and right

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the parents often do not really care and children can pretty much get away with doing what they want.[14]

With regard to other expressions of the recognition of individual dignity, one rarely sees in Bang Chan any physical or even verbal coercion. (The rare use of whipping, noted above, is to punish transgression, not to implement action.) Other than in horseplay, children do not push each other around; in my twenty-two months in Thailand, I saw not one case of young children in a serious fight, despite the fact that I looked for it. Very rare indeed is the parent who uses force or the threat of force on his child; there is no Siamese equivalent to the American intimidation, "You had better do that or else. . . ." In general, Bang Chaners proceed on the simple assumption that if people, including children, do not do what you ask them, they have good—and more important, private—reasons for responding that way; there is no need for, or interest in, self-justification. The major means of inducing recalcitrants to conform to your wishes is to cajole, wheedle, and flatter them (see particularly the responses to the Sentence Completion items, *"The best way to treat a subordinate is . . ."*; *"The worst way to treat a subordinate is . . ."* in chapter V). A less conscious but more frequently practiced alternative is simply to withdraw support: the parent who turns his back on the child and walks out (particularly evident in our TAT stories),[15] the older sibling who refuses to take his younger ones with him when there is entertainment to be seen, and the like. It must be noted, however, that social disengagement, although frequently utilized, does not always work; often the individual who is left suspended merely accepts the fact and continues about his business. The major point to be recognized is that villagers do not use forms of direct, blatant coercion on others. If soft words or the withdrawal of love will not move them, then their decision, freely determined, must be respected.

Love and affection within the family appear primarily in two forms. Their most typical expression is shown through the gifts, favors, and services people do for each other. The degree of affection that individuals feel toward one another is in fact explicitly measured in these terms. Thus, a father says that of all his daughters, the one who has given him the greatest pleasure is "the one who sells things . . . When she gets money,

[14] In qualification, however, it must be noted that all Bang Chaners are extremely sensitive to social cues—partially as a consequence of having to balance off their individualistic propensities against the demands of the authority system—and here the children ignore their parents only because the latter have indicated by their very halfheartedness that they do not care. The children can, and do, quickly hop to it on the slightest indication of parental seriousness: a stern look, for example. My point, however, is that such looks are comparatively rare.

[15] In another paper, Hanks and Hanks (1963) make the same observation on the basis of behavioral materials.

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she gives it to me." In describing his relationship with his maternal grandparents, with whom he spent all but two of the first twelve years of his life, this same person says:

> My younger sister and I were born one year after the other. So mother gave me to grandmother to be weaned. I lived with her until I became a novice at the monastery at the age of twelve. I lived with grandmother, so I loved grandmother and grandfather more. I loved grandmother even more than my own mother and father. Wherever grandfather and grandmother went, I went too. Grandmother loved me: she always gave me sweets and toys. I had everything I wanted because I was the only young thing in the house. She loved me. She was going to give her property to me, land and gold, as much as she was going to give to her own children. But it was only a promise. I got the gold, but not the land, because when grandmother died, grandfather got a new wife. She was young. . . . I didn't quite like her. The young woman was too economical. . . . Sometimes she prevented grandfather from buying good things for me. When grandfather was going to buy gold or anything for me, she stopped him. She wanted him to buy for her more than for his grandchild.

This excerpt, taken from the biography of one of the life history informants and comprising almost the complete portrayal of the relationship between the informant and the individuals with whom he spent the crucial years of his childhood, is by no means atypical. The point is that of all the myriad elements in the relationship, or of all the loving characteristics that in his eyes the grandparents had, he chose to emphasize only the material gifts they had given him as the measure of their love. Other informants are no different: one man said he knew his father did not love him because when he died he left the family home to the Buddhist monastery; and a woman said she admired her father because "when he died there was property left. He was a good man: he did not abandon his children. He was worried about them." (Her other reason for admiring him was that "he was the person who brought me into the world.")

The other major form of familial love is evidenced in the camaraderie, warmth, and generosity that surrounds the family in planning and accomplishing the various tasks associated with rice farming. As indicated earlier, the cultivation and harvesting of rice is not only an economic operation in Bang Chan, but almost a way of life. When villagers must deal with the very real and complex problems of planting and bringing in the harvest, all the individualistic propensities, and even to an extent the authority patterns, with which they normally indulge themselves recede before the coöperative requirements of the task at hand. In a very real sense the functional requirements of the economic activity, particularly during

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harvest time, serve to create a rite of intensification as family members decide together what work will be done by whom, arise early in the morning to work together happily in the fields—sometimes for as long as fourteen hours at a stretch—and actually see the fruits of their coöperative labor mount up on the threshing floors. The sense of familial solidarity and intradependence, and its associated feelings of love, is experienced by all.[10] Also, since harvesting more often than not involves working reciprocally with other families, the host of a reciprocal labor group giving a feast whenever possible at the end of the day, it serves, although to a lesser extent, to intensify feelings of membership in the larger community.

Summary

In my discussion of the "cultural background," I have dwelt primarily on kinship because the family is functionally the most significant social unit in the village and because it is within the context of kinship that personality is developed and, in Bang Chan, most frequently expressed. None of this is meant to imply a lack of importance for other social units—the monastery, the school, the state—or for the non-institutionalized relationships—friends, drinking partners, and business contacts. However, kinship does provide the basic psychological model for all human relationships in Bang Chan,

[10] Although the annual cycle of Thai peasants is described in detail in the available ethnographies on Thai rural life (deYoung 1955, Fraser 1960, Kaufman 1960, Kingshill 1960, Sharp *et al.* 1953) a few words should be added about the psychological dimensions of this cycle. Thus familial solidarity, intradependence, and love are not the only sentiments that are heightened during the harvest period. Perhaps the most striking quality of this season (December to January) is the increase in the optimism, joy, and general psychic well-being of the villagers: people laugh more loudly than usual; they relish talking about the things they are going to buy; parents take more kindly to the gallivanting of the children. These months contrast with transplanting time (late July to early August) and the period prior to harvest (October to November), when an overabundance of rain can destroy the villagers' rice seedlings or their entire crop. These latter periods are marked not so much by anxiety as by a sense of watchful waiting. All these contrast with the Dry season when things are especially quiet in Bang Chan and when villagers spend their time repairing farming equipment and houses, gossiping, or are working on jobs outside the community. Villagers say that of the three major seasons of the year (Dry, February to June; Rainy, June to January; Cold, January to February) they like the Rainy season best. The season coincides with the rice-growing cycle, is marked by Buddhist Lent and, excepting a final week of Monsoon downpour, is in fact the most comfortable period of the year.

These seasonal activities and attitudes also have direct implications for field work. Thus, while villagers gave freely of their time during the dry season and after the harvest, and during the latter were especially outgoing and benign, many simply would not see me during the weeks of planting and harvesting. The benign attitudes of villagers interviewed after the harvest were reflected directly in the data, as were the noncommittal responses of some villagers who were interviewed during transplanting time.

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career. From an epistemological point of view, there is of course nothing strange about such an approach. What is perhaps somewhat unique, however, is that the villagers actually use it as the point of departure in their treatment of the child.

The practical consequences of these equalitarian notions are manifold. For one thing, with the child defined as a separate and equal soul, the relationship between parent and child takes on a highly instrumental flavor; that is, rather than expressing love toward the child as an end in itself or otherwise treating him in ways that require no further justification (it is assumed that love is characteristically an absolute sentiment, not a means to any other satisfaction) villagers explicitly see the relationship between parent and child in contractual terms. Thus villagers say that they "are going to the trouble" of bringing up their children and "doing good things for them" (just as their own parents "went to the trouble" of bringing them up and "doing good things" for them) so that they will have someone to care for them in their old age and make merit for them when they die. Similarly, they say they love their parents because they are indebted to them for bringing them into the world. The language of the "contract" is poignantly explicit: "When I think of my mother, I think of the debt I owe her for bringing me into the world and feeding me so I would survive"; "Parents who do not teach their children how to *waj* [exhibit respect to the parents] get nothing from them. I did many *bunkhuun* [good things requiring reciprocation] for my daughter, so now she gives me everything"; "When I was three my father gave me to my uncle who fed me and trained me, so I loved my uncle more" (cf. pp. 64–66, L. M. Hanks 1959c, and Phillips 1959 for further documentation of this point).

In and of themselves there is nothing strange about these "contractual" criteria. However, they do reflect a fundamental recognition of the independence of parent and child and of the fact that parent and child have the *option* of fulfilling each other's needs. More specifically, they are expressions of the assumption that there is nothing intrinsic to the parent-child relationship that requires the two persons to be linked together. The relationship clearly is not fortuitous, but neither is it absolute. It functions primarily for the instrumental and symbiotic satisfactions that its participants can gain from it.[20] Lacking the absolute elements of an ultimate

[20] In his paper on "Changes in Family Life" in Bang Chan (1959c) L. M. Hanks notes: "At birth a parent ceremonially formally accepts obligations to an unknown infant soul lightly bound to its body; to this point the new-born one without relation to its parent has been under the protection of a spirit mother. This phrasing contrasts sharply with the Occidental concept of 'flesh and blood.'" In another place in the manuscript, Hanks also comments: ". . . but every case [every kinship tie] is reducible, if one presses the question, to benefits of an older or richer or stronger for the

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593 relationship (*disinterested* appreciation or admiration of the other individual; loving the child or parent in his own right, rather than in terms of his effect on the self) [9] it has a strong undercurrent of unreliability. Since the maintenance of the relationship is always dependent on what the participants can gain from it, *i.e.*, from the other person, and since the participants are essentially free to break the relationship once they feel that such rewards are not forthcoming, it is inevitable that there will be many instances when just that will happen. The crucial point is that there is nothing over and above the instrumental nature of the relationship to keep the individuals tied to one another. The only possible exception, an important one, is that which goes with the realization that by treating one's child or parent nicely, one is behaving in a moral way and is thus accumulating Buddhist merit; but even this purpose is avowedly self-referring in nature. In this regard, it might be noted that other than the [585] marriage ceremony, which is ignored by half of Bang Chan newlyweds, there are no institutionalized attempts to sanctify the solidarity of the family, or for that matter the solidarity of almost any social group. That is, unlike China and the West, there is nothing in traditional Thai folk belief and ritual, or in the literature of the indigenous "Great Tradition," that alludes to the sacredness of the family as a social unit. All moral aphorisms concerning family relationships are phrased in terms of the dyadic relations between individuals, not in terms of affiliation with the family unit as such.

593 The looseness of the ties that result from the instrumental nature of the
*125 parent-child relationship are perhaps best revealed in the villagers' responses to the Sentence Completion stimuli, *"We want to give our child to him because . . .* (This is the English translation of the best Thai translation of the original English item, *"He wanted to give his child away because . . ."*). The reasons behind the use of this somewhat uniquely worded item are important. (The reader might imagine American responses to such a query.) The item was selected for inclusion in the SCT battery only after it became apparent that there might be a pattern to what

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[593] services of a younger, poorer, or weaker. This includes parent and child, sibling and sibling, or husband and wife, and all kinship relations are reducible to these terms."

*[125] [9] The responses to the Sentence Completion stimuli, *"When I think of my mother, I think of . . ."* and *"When I think of my father, I think of . . ."* are particularly revealing on this point. The vast majority of the responses on both these stimuli are in terms of the parents' effect on the self rather than in terms of what the parents are in their own right. Careful checking of the cues indicates that there is nothing in their grammatical or semantic structure that would predispose informants to produce such completions, *i.e.*, it is just as easy and feasible for informants to say ". . . how beautiful she is" or ". . . how clever she is" as it is for them to say ". . . the good things she has done for me." See chapter v for the actual responses.

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were at first a series of unrelated incidents—that is, the possible tenuousness of the links between parent and child first came to my attention with the occasional, but wholly unselfconscious, reports from informants on what to my Western ears seemed like rather turbulent childhoods: their frequent movement from family to family while they were still children and their own care, as adults, of friends' or relatives' children. (This suspicion was reinforced and partially verified later while recording life histories). Later it was noticed that, in sharp contrast to the West, villagers tend to be less concerned about the illness of children than the illness of adults; informants with whom this observation was discussed said either that they had not noticed or explained it by saying that since children recover so quickly from sickness there is less need to worry about them. Finally and perhaps most important, it became clear that the request of the villager who stopped me and asked me to take and rear her child was by no means idiosyncratic; the request was made on four separate occasions by different individuals, both within and without Bang Chan. The intent of these requests were difficult to ascertain. Since the requests tended to come up rather suddenly, in the presence of the child, and were always accompanied by laughter, they may well have been said in "jest" or [illegible] threat to the child. On a few occasions the parent took pains to be sure the child understood what was being said, in which case the child responded with screaming. Also, Europeans have traditionally been used as bogeymen in the disciplining of children. (I myself have occasionally been addressed as a malevolent spirit by youngsters.) On the other hand, because children of poor families have been known to be given to individuals of high status, and because Occidentals are automatically assigned such status, it is not altogether unlikely that the parent was sounding me out as a potential patron of the child.

The problem with all the above, however, is that it was unknown to what extent they represented typical or deviant attitudes and responses. The Sentence Completion item, *"We want to give our child to him because . . ."* was selected for use in the SCT administered to a larger, representative sample of villagers because, being an extreme phrasing of these attitudes, it might shed light on the villagers' general readiness to accept them as well as their justifications for them. Of the fifty-six informants who responded to the item, 79 percent accepted the premise and 21 percent rejected it, *i.e.*, "I do not want to give my child to anybody." Of the forty-five individuals who accepted the premise, nineteen said it was good for either the child or the parent, *i.e.*, "that person was good, and he wanted that person to teach his child to be good"; "I would get some money by giving it away"; "I could not stand the child anymore." And eighteen said it was justifiable, *i.e.*, "because of poverty"; "I did not have the means to rear the child."

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None of the above is meant to imply that 79 percent of the adults of Bang Chan would in fact give away their children. But the relatively high frequency of agreement they exhibited in admitting to such a possibility and the fact that as many as 65 percent agreed that it was either good or justifiable reveals something of the psychological environment within which the Bang Chan child is reared and where he learns his basic orientations toward other persons. The responses to this single stimulus must of course be seen in the context of the more naturalistic, behavioral materials presented earlier. The point of all these illustrations, however, is that they indicate there is nothing sacrosanct about any human tie in Bang Chan, even that which exists between parent and child. If necessity or personal predilection requires, then this tie too may be broken. What is perhaps most significant here, from a developmental point of view, is that the breaking of the tie always exists as a realistic potentiality in the life of the child. Reared in an environment where he learns that no human tie need be permanent or sustaining, the developing child inevitably takes on some of these same patterns of expectation in his own dealings with others. Thus the villager who abandons his spouse or the employee who with little warning leaves his employer are acting in terms of patterns the prototypes of which they either actually experienced as children or came to expect as part of the realities of interpersonal relations in Bang Chan.

The second major source of the villagers' loose relationships lacks the developmental reference of the above. To a certain extent it is not even social relational in nature, although our concern with it stems from its having crucial consequences to the social orientations of individuals. I am referring here to the Buddhist emphasis on the primacy of individual action and individual responsibility. Without going into a lengthy discussion of the subtleties of Buddhist doctrine, it is imperative to point out that the principal tenet of Hinayana Buddhism is the complete psychological freedom, isolation, and responsibility of every person. This is not the Occidental idea of "free will," but rather the notion that every person is a free agent, responsible only to and for himself, and that he inevitably reaps the fruits of his own conduct. Buddhist canonical literature is replete with references stressing the centrality of this doctrine. The last words of the Lord Buddha before he left this world to achieve the sublime state of *nibphaan* (nirvana) are said to have been: "Work out your own salvation with diligence." A frequently quoted passage of the *Dhamapada* reads: "By oneself is evil done; By oneself one suffers; By oneself evil is left undone; By oneself one is purified." The whole complex cosmology relating to the accumulation of merit and demerit is phrased in terms of the individual's lonely journey through cycles of interminable existences working out his own moral destiny. Who his progenitors were, what kind of environment he was born

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1923–1924], translated by Cunnison) and Homans (1961) have argued, that human relationships everywhere are based on just such a consideration, usually concealed by ethically palatable amenities (such as in American culture, from which most of Homans' empirical materials come). However, what is so intriguing about the Thai case is that *quid pro quo* factors are forever in mind as justifications and explanations of why people relate to one another. Although villagers, because they are such polite people, rarely say to others, "I am helping you because I know the day will come when I need your help," or "Do this for me because you owe me a favor," they do use such arguments *to explain* the basis of their ties: "Of all my friends I love Lek the most because she has done me the most favors (*bunkhuns*)"; "The purpose of marriage is to have a companion who will take care of you when you get sick"; "Of all my daughters, the one who gives me the greatest pleasure is the one who sells things. . . . When she gets money she gives it to me"; "Friends are very useful because it means that you have people who will do you favors. And when they need help, you will take care of them. This is love." [21]

One of the finest discussions of the nature of reciprocal obligations appears in a recent paper by George M. Foster (1961) that deals not with a Thai community, but with the Mexican village of Tzintzuntzan. Foster outlines in his paper the notion of the "dyadic contract" which he presents as a model for the social structure of Tzintzuntzan. Or, more precisely: "Specifically, I suggest a model . . . to reconcile the institutionalized roles which can be recognized and described in the community with the underlying principle which gives the social system coherence." Foster's focus thus differs somewhat from our psychological emphasis. However, his abstract statement of the "dyadic contract" provides such an excellent summation of the major factor making for enduring social relationships in Bang Chan that it merits quoting in detail here. There are of course inevitable differences in cultural content between the two communities and the fact that

[21] Such explanations are not unique to Bang Chan. In his description of the Thai–Lue village of Ban Phaed in Northern Thailand, Moerman (1962) observes: "The society of Ban Phaed operates in terms of something got for every something given. This is not merely an analytic device which permits a predictive, if crass, view of any human society. It is the way in which villagers explain and evaluate their own behavior. Favor for favor, visit for visit, meal for meal, one should return what he receives. 'We help our kinsmen because they help us. If a kinsman however close didn't help me, I wouldn't help him.' 'We care for our children when they are young; they will care for us when we are old.' Actions which we would justify in terms of compassion, generosity, public-spirit, patriotism, pride in a job well done, the Lue villager speaks of in terms of reciprocal, short-term self-interest. Their actions are no more selfish than ours. Far from it. But the moral rhetoric of a Lue villager is different from our own. In politics, economics, family life, and religion it focuses on something got for something given."

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V

Analysis: The SCT's Exploration of Thai Personality[1]

Attitudes Toward Authority

The first area to be dealt with is in a sense the easiest. Thai attitudes toward authority represent what is perhaps the most explicitly expressed and highly ramified area of their social psychological life. The notion of authority—a sense of superordination and subordination—is an intrinsic part of their linguistic structure, it being impossible to address or refer to a person without indicating his social status relative to the self; two-week-old infants are taught to *waj*, or offer the gesture of obeisance to superiors; during elections, villagers say that they are going to vote for the prime minister because "he is our Master. He has been very good and kind to us. He is like our father, and we are like his children"; the entire structure of the family is predicated on a system of superordination and subordination, even to the extent of considering a twin born a few minutes ahead of his sibling the latter's social superior. Examples expressive of this emphasis in the workaday life of the villagers could be cited endlessly.

What is impressive in the data to follow is not only the near unanimity of villagers in responding positively to what are essentially neutral authority situations, but the tendency on the part of a large number to respond positively to the authority situation even when the authority figure is avowedly wrong. Many of their responses also make quite explicit the underlying ethical justifications for the authority system.

The first item, *"When the phuujinjaj told him to do it, he . . . ,"* is a

[1] Words and phrases appearing in parentheses in the responses on the following pages are for purposes of clarification. The few Thai words appearing in the responses are either "complex concepts," or "difficult to translate" terms, and have been retained mainly for those readers familiar with Thai. At the top of the table, the English language item that was originally prepared for the villagers appears first; it is followed by the best English translation of the actual Thai item given to informants, including the Thai pronouns that were used. Intra-sample differences (age, sex, religion, economic position), where important, are indicated in the text, not the tables.

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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social relationship that the rejection creates. One gains the distinct impression that to the emotionally self-concerned and self-sufficient villager (for whatever reasons he became self-concerned and self-sufficient) it is generally not worth the trouble to reaffirm the relationship.

None of the above should be taken to mean that the villagers do not *behave* in a dependent manner. Nothing could be further from the truth. The entire authority system is based upon the individual's willingness to consider himself a dependent subordinate to somebody else. But this dependency is phrased in terms of the reciprocal relationship existing between the subordinate and his superior. He remains dependent only as long as the superior satisfies his individual needs. From a social psychological point of view, his superior is actually just as "dependent" upon him.

The villagers' distinctive phrasing of their "dependency" needs is perhaps revealed most clearly in their structuring of the items, *"When he thinks of his mother, he thinks of . . ."* and *"When he thinks of his father, he thinks of. . . ."* These stimuli are related to dependency in the simplest possible way: they ask the informant to organize his thoughts and perceptions about those individuals who have been his greatest sources of dependency. Perhaps the most striking attribute of the responses is that, with the exception of two informants on the "mother" item, every villager explicitly thinks of his parents in terms of himself rather than in terms of what the parents are in their own right. There are simply no completions here on the order of "how wise she was," "how strong he was," "what a wonderful person he was," and the like. It is as if disinterested appreciation were simply not one of the villagers' cognitive and emotional premises.

TABLE 8

When he thinks of his mother, he thinks of . . .
When we think of mother, we think of . . .

SELF-BENEFIT:	46%	her love and her kindness and her protection.
		the good deeds she has done for him; her taking care of him since he was a little boy.
		her bringing him food and water ever since he was a child.
		her bringing him up.
OBLIGATION:	43%	making merit for her, as she died a long time ago.
		her well-being; he is concerned about it.
		her goodness. He had fed from her breast; it was her blood that fed him. He must not forget her kindness (her *bunkhun*).
		her kindness (*bunkhun*) to him. He must obey his mother.

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TABLE 9

*125 *When he thinks of his father, he thinks of . . .*
*128 *When thinking of father, he think of . . .*
*156
593

SELF-BENEFIT:	36%	the protection which his father offered to him.
		the good deeds his father has done for him; his father has taken care of him since he was a little boy.
		the time when he looked after him, taking care of him in sickness. If he had no father, he might not be alive.
OBLIGATION:	50%	he prays for him on Friday.
		his goodness in bringing us up from childhood. It is essential that children repay their father's goodness when he is old and can no longer work.
		if father is alive, he should go visit him and bring food. If father is dead, he should make merit for him.
		his kindness (*bunkhun*) done for her.
		his kindness to him (*bunkhun*). He obeys his father and repays the debt of kindness.

In thinking about their parents in terms of themselves, the informants give their responses in two closely related forms. They think of those characteristics of the parents that directly benefited them: their goodness and kindness to the informant; that they carried the informant in their womb or brought him into the world; that they reared the informant, took care of him when he was ill, or gave him money. Forty-six percent of the sample respond in this manner on the "mother" item and 36 percent on the "father" item. Some of their responses suggest that they were deeply touched by their recollections: one informant remembered her father "bringing her up, since the time her feet were as small as shells," and another thinks of the time her mother "brought me sweets and comforted me when I was frightened." The numerous references to food, as expressions of benevolent concern, should not be overlooked.

The other major form of the villagers' responses, and the one that bears out our earlier point, is the deep feeling of obligation that individuals feel toward their parents. In several instances, the obligation is simply assumed, and the informant gives a completion which describes the nature of his obligatory act: making merit for the parent, giving alms or blankets to monks, caring for the parent when he gets old. In most instances, however, informants indicate that they are obliged to their parents because of the kind and good things their parents have done for them. In a few cases, it is a moral imperative: "It is essential that the children repay their father's

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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goodness when he is old and can no longer work"; "if you are a male, you must get ordained to redeem the sins of the parents. Just like sending them money." Many of the responses included in this category do not refer explicitly to the reciprocity of the child, but are phrased in terms of the *bunkhuns* that the parent has done for the child. Because the term *bunkhun* assumes reciprocity as part of its root meaning—good deeds which are reciprocated—references to the *bunkhuns* of the parents are included here. All told, 43 percent of the sample fall into this obligation category on the "mother" item and 50 percent on the "father" item.

The entire discussion above leads to the proposition that if the premise of reciprocity did not play such a major role in the villagers' assumptive world, there would be a few more informants who would be willing to perceive their parents as living an existence independent of themselves, and fewer informants so concerned with repaying their parents for fulfilling what is, after all, the parents' primary psychosocial role. Such a concern is likely to arise only when there is an underlying awareness that the parents have an option of fulfilling or not fulfilling their role, and that this has been impressed on the individual so dependent upon their choice.

The next item, in its manifest purpose and in its diversity of response, is less emotionally loaded than the above. In fact, perhaps the major function of the item, *"A real close friend is one who . . ."* (and its companion piece, *"The thing I want most in my closest friend is . . . ,"* which is so similar in response it will not be presented), is to indicate that there are no widely shared notions of a "real close friend" in Bang Chan. Whether this suggests that the figure of the "close friend" is unimportant to the villagers is uncertain. However, the diversity of the villagers' responses permits us to say relatively little about the typicality of the socially equal, yet dependent, figure in the village.[4]

Examination of the responses indicates that they fall into six different categories. Listed in the order of their frequency, "a real close friend is one who" has such qualities as faithfulness, loyalty, the willingness to die for his friend, and keeps his word (27 percent). Almost as many people (24 percent) agree that he is an individual who helps you, especially if you are poor or are in need of reminders to behave in a moral way. One informant in this category voices a definition of a "close friend" that I have heard on several occasions when villagers were discussing their relationships with kinsmen or neighbors: ". . . one who helps you when you are in trouble and goes away when you are happy." A third group (18 percent) perceives

[4] An earlier point by Hanks and Phillips (1961: 642) might not be insignificant in this regard. We noted that it "is difficult for an equal to give anything of value to an equal or to command his 'respect.' Indeed, he stands as a potential competitor for favors."

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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human beings. In fact, the absence of any reference to other human beings, especially parents, is striking.

Of the seventeen persons who ask for supernatural help, seven, all women, explicitly say that they would call their *khwaan* (or "soul-stuff") back. Since this is a distinctively Thai concept, it merits a few words of explanation. Thai ontology holds that every individual is inhabited by a *khwaan*, who during childhood (when the individual is unstable and immature) or during a crisis can escape the body through an invisible hole in the head. One of the major functions of the top-knot worn by half the children of Bang Chan is to cover the invisible hole so that the *khwaan*

TABLE 21

If one is frightened, the best thing to do is . . .
If one is frightened, the best thing one ought to do is (namely) . . .

EQUANIMITY:	40%	to keep his heart calm. to pull yourself together (to try to compose yourself). Sometimes, just run away. to control oneself. to control your emotions until they are better. to stay *chəəj-chəəj*.
DEPENDENCY:	31%	to exclaim, "Lord help me!" to call one's soul-stuff back; call upon God, Allah. to think of Lord Buddha, his teaching, and his priests. to sometimes exclaim, "*phra chəəj*" ("Lord Buddha, or Buddhism, or monks—help me.")
FLIGHT:	8%	to avoid the situation; to run away.

cannot escape; also most life-cycle ceremonies have a special ritual devoted to "calling the *khwaan*," who although obviously not absent from the individual at the time, is called to reaffirm the necessity of his being in his place when the individual needs him most. At the same time, the formal ritual of "calling the *khwaan*" memorializes the fact that the *khwaan* is in his proper place, thus indicating that the individual in whom he resides has had the internal stability to reach the point in life that he has in fact reached. The "calling of the *khwaan*" is usually, although not always, performed by women, which might explain why all the villagers who give this response are female. The *khwaan* has four crucial attributes: (1) although he is of the self, he does have an independent existence of his own; (2) he is that part of the self that gives the self stability, and from an analytic point of view, is really an objectification of human stability; (3) he

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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Thus, in explaining why he loves one of his closest friends, a villager says:

> We love each other because we never contradict each other or disagree. That is why we love each other. If we disagreed, there would be no love. [Investigator: "It is normal sometimes even for close friends to disagree. About what kind of things do you and your close friend disagree?"] We never disagree. Only people who are drunkards and take opium disagree. That is why our friendship has lasted so long. [Investigator: "What would happen if you disagreed?"] We would not love each other, and maybe he would take revenge on me.

In another place, this same informant says of his relationship with his wife: "My wife and I never quarrel. If we quarreled, we would have to separate. There would be nothing to divide—except the children." As indicated earlier, many villagers, fearing the volatility of a quarrel, actually do separate, often even before the dispute gets going. Similarly, individuals, particularly if they are in subordinate positions, hesitate even to approach others lest they stimulate, let alone elicit, anger. Villagers will hesitate to approach others even if they are not the object, but simply a possible catalyst, of another's potential aggression: witness the cases of the land sale deal and the broken noria cited earlier. Note that in these cases it is not manifest aggression but merely the anticipation of it that inhibits villagers from initiating or maintaining interpersonal involvements.

Although villagers decline to express or to be exposed to direct aggression, they do have several indirect, if somewhat more complicated, ways of venting these feelings. Of these, the simplest is to gossip nastily about people. The frequency of this characteristic peasant activity is considerable in the village: in fact, an uncharitable observer might, on the basis of Bang Chan, just as readily entitle a book about Thailand *Land of Gossip* as *Land of Smiles*. However, the very frequency of gossip seems to mitigate its intensity or effect. Villagers are so accustomed to it that it is almost a way of talking, a style of speech. And as is the case with much village speech, villagers listen to, but do not necessarily believe, the nasty things one person might say about another. Also, excepting those cases where a person's complaints are either realistic or justifiable, people are just as likely to listen to an individual's gossip for what it says about him as for what it says about the person whom he is criticizing. None of this is to suggest that the person gossiping does not attain release, or that the person about whom he is gossiping, *if* he found out, would not be hurt or peeved. Rather, it is the situation in which the hostility is expressed that mitigates its effect.

Less frequent and more painful than the above are the formal, almost

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*125 *128 781 [782] *125 *128 521 *156 181 • [593] the part of older people.[10] Particularly obvious is the absence of any reference to accumulating Buddhist merit. Neither is there any reference to the pleasures derived from dealing happily or enjoyably with other people. The closest we get to this is with the responses of two informants who are concerned mainly with the welfare of their children, and who speak in terms of "inspiring respect" in their children or assuming the role of "doctor" who, either by his knowledge (in case the children are ill) or wealth, could take care of them. Given all the conceivable things that villagers might wish to be—fanciful, real, personal, social, of this world, and of any world—the dominant wish is to have status, wealth, and respectability within their prevailing peasant context.

*125 *128 181 556 The next item, "*Most of all he wants to . . .*" is essentially a confirmation of the above findings. However, perhaps because of the syntax of the Thai version of the item and the inclusion of the word, "most" ("*The thing which raw wants the most is* (*namely*) . . .") the responses assume a considerably more extreme and "unimodal" form. The overwhelming majority of the informants, 77 percent, want only one thing: money. A few of them say that they want what are essentially cultural variations of money: property, rice fields, land, cattle, and jewelry. Several of them almost wax purple about the significance of money in their lives: "*The thing which raw wants the most is* (*namely*) . . . have money and gold, because money can help us all the time. Whatever one wishes to have, one can use money to buy it all. Even when one wants a wife, if one has a lot of money one can have anyone's daughter"; ". . . have money. Money is better than anything else. It is only the moon and stars that money cannot buy"; ". . . to have money. She wants money very much because when she lacks other things she can find something to take their place, but when she lacks money she is most unhappy"; ". . . have wealth because everything else comes after that." These responses, of course, explicate the major function of money. They indicate that money is not an end in itself, but a means by which to achieve some of the other life goals appearing here.

*125 *128 181 593 556 The minority responses to this item are in no case held by more than four individuals. Four villagers do give religious responses, saying that what they want most is to accumulate merit (one mentions both merit and money); three refer to maintaining the welfare of their families (one of them merging money and succorance by saying that he wants enough money to provide for his family); and four say that they want happiness (again, two of them linking money and happiness together).

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[796] [793] [10] There is nothing in the grammatical-semantic structure of the Thai version of this item inhibiting a religiously oriented response. The Thai cognate for the verb "to be" here is "*pen*," which could easily result in a response such as ". . . *pen khon thii mii bun*," or ". . . a person who has merit." This would be the most obvious "religious" completion under the circumstances.

125
[592]

37.a. Excuse me, but at present do you have a (wife/husband) who lives and eats with you, or not?

1.	Yes	456
2.	Yes, qualified _____	6
3.	No	78

[589]
[586]

b. IF NO: Excuse me, but is this because you are widowed, separated, divorced, or is there some other reason?

4.	Widowed	45
5.	Separated	9
6.	Divorced	1
7.	Other, specify	10
—	No Answer	7

[592]
[162]

38.a. Your own children, all of them that have ever been born, how many are there?

0.	None	84
1.	One	32
2.	2 to 3	70
3.	4 to 5	76
4.	6 or more	233

b. How many of your children are still living?

0.	None	89
1.	One	80
2.	2 to 3	83
3.	4 to 5	77
4.	6 or more	77
—	No Answer	4

c. How many of your children have died?

[165]

0.	None	196
1.	One	48
2.	2 to 3	34
3.	4 to 5	17
4.	6 or more	9
—	No Answer	9

39.a. Have you ever been ordained as a priest, or not?

[793]
[792]

1.	Yes	197
2.	No	11
—	No Answer	4

(Male Buddhist (210))

b. IF NO: In the future, do you want to be ordained as a priest, or not?

3.	Yes	20
4.	No	11

c. ASK ALL: How many sons do you have twenty years old or over?

[592]
[162]

5.	None	178
6.	One	24
7.	Two	29
8.	Three or more	29
—	Unascertainable	23

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125 [793] [593] [792] [162]

39.d. IF A MAN HOME 20 AND UP: Of your sons over twenty, how many have been ordained as Buddhist priests, or not?

7. No	210
8. None	33
9. One	58
X. Two	25
Y. Three or more	15

e. Do you have any sons under twenty?

9. Yes	198
X. No	108
— No Answer	37

[793] [782]

f. IF YES: In future, do you want your sons under twenty to be ordained as priests, or not?

X. Yes	186
0. No	—
— No Answer	2

g. IF YES: But aside from your admirable desire to have them ordained, in your true heart how sure is your expectation? Are you very sure or not very sure, or fairly sure that they will be ordained?

1. Very sure	150
2. Not sure	26
3. Fairly sure	12
4. Unascertainable	9
NA	1

h. All over Thailand there are some Thai men who are over 50 but have never been ordained as priests. For what various reasons might this happen?
(Use code at end)

[461] IC. Suppose there was some work you could do individually, or that could be done in a small group of two or three, or that could be done in a large group. [illegible] way would you prefer to do the work--as an individual, or as a group of two or three, or in a large group?

8. Individually	60
9. Small group	55
X. Large group	202
Y. Undecided, depends	4
0. Unascertainable	12

[572] IL. Around here in BC-ET there are some people who have many close friends and there are other people who have few close friends. And how about yourself? Do you have more close friends than most people around here, or about the same as most people around here, or fewer close friends than most people around here?

5. More than most	62
6. Fewer than most	36
7. About the same	154
8. Unascertainable	23

60

125 64.c. IF YES: At what age did he leave HO?
[166] 1. Below 15 years 8
[592] 2. 15 to 19 years 28
3. 20 to 29 years 50
4. 30 years or more 5
5. Unascertainable 6

d. IF YES: For how long has he (she, they) been gone from HO?
6. Less than one year 12
7. 1 to 4 42
8. 5 to 9 19
9. 10 years or more 19
X. Unascertainable

[464] e. IF YES: What various duties or jobs does he (she, they) do in
[463] Bangkok?
1. Housewife 17
2. Unskilled laborer 19
3. Skilled laborer 33
Armed forces 17
Service 9
Employee 5
4. Other (retired, selling things) 2
5. Unascertainable 4

[166] f. IF YES: During the last year, have you seen this person(s)
[592] several times, once, or not at all?
[602] 9. Several times 65
X. Once 16
Y. Not at all 8
O. Unascertainable 3

g. IF YES: Does he (she, they) make regular remittances to this house?
X. Yes 31
Y. No 56
O. Unascertainable 5

[207] 65. Do you listen to the radio regularly, daily, occasionally, seldom, or never?
6. Regularly-daily 45
7. Occasionally 66
8. Seldom 148
9. Never 60
— Unascertainable 14

[525] 66.a. Do you play the lottery regularly, occasionally, seldom, or never?
1. Regularly 20
2. Occasionally 54
3. Seldom 220
4. Never 38
5. Unascertainable —
— No Answer 1

b. IF REGULARLY, OCCASIONALLY, OR SELDOM: Suppose you were to win the second prize of 10,000 baht. What various things would you do with this money?
(See code)

597 As of 1953 seven adopted children were reported to
621 be living in Bangchan. Since only those mentioned by family
• 593 heads as their adopted children were so recorded and since some of the information on family members were not given directly by the family heads, it is possible that there might be some more adopted children who appeared in the 1953 census as nephews or nieces. The authenticity of the term 'adopted child' as used in the village is nevertheless rather questionable. There has never been such a practice like legal registration of adopted children in the village, although this is provided by law. Moreover, maltreatment of an adopted child was not unheard of. In 1952 one family head reported that his adopted daughter had "run away" to Bangkok. In 1953 a young widow, an adopted daughter of an operator of a coffee shop in the village, also "ran away". When her whereabouts became known, no effort was made by the foster parents to return to the woman her golden necklace valued at one thousand baht. Later she was forced back home, being beaten all the way in spite of her complaint that she was pregnant. It was also not infrequent that an adopted child left his foster parents and took residence as a dependent relative in another family in the neighborhood. Such incidents points toward the possibility of 'adopted child' being used as a nom de grace for a prospective free family laborer.

162 Table 4 shows that with the exception of the ecclesi-
592 astical family the size of families in Bangchan ranges from
621 one to fourteen, averaging 5.7 persons per family. This

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 66]

178 laboring profession, limiting the work to transplanting only.
592 Apparently she did not earn enough. During this hard period
621 the young boy left her. The woman continued to live alone for two years. After the collapse of her shack in 1953 she went to live with a young couple in KY5 who are not related to her. In exchange for room and board and a nominal allowance, the old woman agreed to take care of the couple's baby.

178 Case 8: In 1949, a couple, both teachers in the Bang-
592 chan Primary School, were sharing the same dwelling with the
895 wife's mother's family, but having a separate food arrange-
434 ment for themselves and their two young daughters. Thus,
621 they appeared in the 1949 census as a separate family. In local standard, the combined income of these two teachers
[416] was quite high. The family lived well and was the only family in Bangchan that owned a camera. In the 1953 census this family became a part of the wife's mother's family because they had arranged to share the same food. The reason that was given for this new arrangement was that some time earlier the wife's brother, who had been living with his mother, got married and moved out to start an independent family, whereupon the old lady suggested that her daughter move in to fill the vacancy.

178 Case 9: In 1949, a family of three, consisting of
592 a young couple and their six years old daughter, worked as
621 farm hands for the wife's mother for fixed pay on which they
[593] were able to live independently. Two or three years later, the wife's mother asked this family to move into her household

178 592 621 [593] because four members of her family had just left her to establish families of their own. The son-in-law accepted this invitation and had since taken over the management of his mother-in-law's large 60-rai rice farm.

Case 10: In 1949, an old woman was living with two boys, one distantly related to her, the other without any [427] [792] [431] blood relationship. She was operating a small rented rice farm. Some time in the past she had made a generous offer of her own house to the temple which was not acted upon by the receiving party. In 1953, the headpriest contemplated an expansion of one of the temple buildings and approached the woman for the gift. The woman complied with the request, had her house dismantled, saving only the kitchen, and sent all the building materials to the temple. Meanwhile, the two boys had left her; one went to live with his mother in [593] [431] the village, the other went to Bangkok. Later, the woman joined the household of her younger brother, who lived next door, with the understanding that the brother had free use of her buffalo in exchange for her room and board.

Case 11: In 1949, a woman was living in KY8 with her aged mother and her baby born of her separated husband [586] [587] who was a policeman. Two years later, the woman married a widower, who lived in the same hamlet, and brought along her mother and son to live with her new husband.

With the exception of Case 6, a lone aged woman who was survived by none after her death, these cases may be grouped according to the nature of acceptance of the families

178 These five cases may be grouped as follows: two
592 cases of relatives of family heads separating from 'extended'
621 families, two cases of one spouse leaving the other, and one case of a family head deserting his wife and children.

Pattern of Establishment of New Families

593 Bangchan offspring customarily continued to live with
592 their parents as long as they were not married regardless of how old they might be. In the eyes of the parents, an offspring is always their child, immature and needing parental supervision, as long as he has not been able to acquire a spouse; and until then the parents-offspring mutual obligations, necessitating living together, must continue to exist. Thus, it was not uncommon to see several unmarried adults crowding in one family providing too large a labor force relative to a small parcel of land on which the family
[58] worked. In this context, marriage serves an important economic function of giving impetus to the start of new producing units in the village. There is no corresponding service in areas where the extended family system predominates such as in China and India.

583 Two distinct kinds of marriage were conceived of in Bangchan: the conventional marriage with the sanction of parents or guardians of both parties which was usually preceded by formal arrangement and accompanied by marriage rites sponsored by the bride's family; and the popular marriage by mutual understanding between the man and wife without

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)p956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bangchan

TABLE 8

PARENTAL GIFTS TO 63 NEWLY ESTABLISHED FAMILIES
Bangchan, Thailand, 1909-48

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431
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Items	Number of Families Receiving	Range of Individual Gift	Total	Average for Those Receiving
F. implement*	63	1 set	63 sets	1 set
Buffalo	47	1-4 heads	73 heads	1.5 heads
Land	37	6-228 rai	1112 rai	30 rai
Paddy stock	32	40-1000 tang	4495 tang	140 tang
Building	12	1-2 bldg.	16 bldg.	1.3 bldg.
Cash	4	80-400 baht	760 baht	190 baht
Boat	3	1 boat	3 boats	1 boat
Gold	2	2-20 baht**	22 baht**	11 baht**

* Only basic items were included -- plow, harrow, sickle, etc.

** One baht weight of gold is equivalent to fifteen grams.

593 There was one item of parental gifts which is not
431 shown in Table 8 -- the household equipment. Two of the
415 63 families reported that they received a complete set of kitchen utensils, and two included jars in their gift lists. After checking the result of this survey with some informants, however, many admitted that they did not include these kitchen utensils in the list because they were obvious items. Nevertheless, there was no basis on which it could be inferred that every newly established family received a set of the kitchen utensils. It was therefore decided to omit the household equipment from the table.

593 Another form of parental gifts was the practice,
427 if the parents had enough land to spare, of letting the
423 couple work on some ten or twenty rai free of charge for the first two years. Rent might be charged after that, but there were also cases in which the couples continue to work on the parcel without paying any rent to their parents and finally took it for granted that the parcels belonged to them.

Economic Significance of the Family

59 Much space has been devoted to discussion of the family because of its significant role as the only organized producing unit in the village economy. Another important function of the family was mentioned in previous sections -- through privileges extended to the majority of newly wed couples during the nascent period, the old family facilitated

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)p956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
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CHAPTER IV

FARMING POPULATION

*243
*128
463
621

It was indicated in the section on occupational structure in Bangchan, Chapter III, that there were two groups of villagers whose main incomes were directly derived from farming -- the farm operating and farm laboring families. These two groups constituted 254 out of a total of 296 families in the village in 1953 (Table 10). It should be noted, however, that Table 10 was constructed on the basis of the principal source of income of the family heads, and that the family was taken as a unit.

When individual farm workers are considered, four groups may be differentiated: (1) Farm operators; (2) Family workers; (3) Hired laborers; and (4) Piece-workers.

*243
*128
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Farm operators are those who are assumed to actively manage the farm. Actually, it has been observed that some wives did direct the farm work while their husbands assumed only a passive role. It is rather difficult, however, to point out among some one hundred couples which spouse actually manages the family farm. To save time, and perhaps embarssment, it was assumed that, where both husband and wife were involved, the husband -- the official family head --was the farm operator regardless of his actual role.

243 434 household. Although labor earnings is a truer measure of a farmer's return, it is less widely used than labor income because no such estimation is involved in this latter measure and because prequisites are much less important in the United States. On Thai rice farms, however, it is not as difficult to estimate the value of farm products used in the household because generally only one kind of farm product -- rice -- is involved and the consumption of rice, although in large amount, can be precisely determined. To a much lesser extent poultry products may be used, but it is also fairly easy to estimate.

593 465 In theory, the remuneration for family workers' effort is imputed at the going wage rate on their actual contribution in the farm work, when labor earning is calculated. In practice, however, Bangchan family workers receive in addition to board and lodging a certain amount of cash from their family head who is also the farm operator and who pays this amount from farm net cash return. The amount an individual family worker receives varies according to individual need and often to the whim of the family head. To be sure, there is no such thing as a fixed allowance because yearly fluctuation of farm income does not permit such arrangement. One Bangchan farmer put it this way, 593 434 465 "Hired labor is usually more expensive than family labor except in good years, for you can't help giving generous gifts to the family in a good year. This year (1949, the year following a bumper 1948-49 crop) I gave my two daughters

434 300 baht for clothing, 500 baht which they spent mostly
465 on a pilgrimage to the Temple of Buddha's Footprint, and
• 593 670 baht for two gold necklaces. That's a total of 1470 baht for the two of them. My wife alone took 1,100 baht received from the sale of the early variety, and I don't want to take the trouble to ask where the money went."

It has been observed that farm income varies greatly from farm to farm as well as from year to year. Farm household expense, on the other hand, has been observed to be less variable. Although the remunerations for farm operators and family workers are directly related to farm income, it would seem unwise to discuss farm income without bringing in first the discussion on farm technology and farm organization and management. We propose, therefore, to limit at the time being our discussion of the remunerations of farm operators and family workers to indicating their respective sources only. We shall have occasion to deal with their patterns and magnitudes in Chapter VII, which will be exclusively devoted to income and consumption of farm operators.

465 The hired laborer receives his remuneration for the
178 farm work in the form of annual wage which is paid by his employer, the farm operator, according to the provision of the oral contract made before each working season. It was found in 1948 that this annual wage was paid in either cash or kind, and in addition the laborer received free board and lodging and one or two working suits. Of 13 hired laborers covered by the 1948 survey, five were paid a cash wage

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)1956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
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recovery of a boat stolen, 390 baht on "laxity", and 30,000 baht on a trip to Mecca. The gifts to offspring included only gifts presented when offspring left the family to start an independent family of their own.

Special Receipts

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By special receipts we mean major items of receipts in addition to those regularly obtained from crops, labor, rent, and interest on loans extended. These are counterparts of special expenses, and informations about them were obtained from the 96 sample-families in the same manner and almost concurrently. Examples of these special receipts are: sales of land, gold, and major farm equipment; loans obtained, full or partial settlement of loans extended; gifts and remittances; and odd receipts like those from government lottery prizes, running a gambling house, and laxity practices. Special receipts of the 96 sample-families during the period from March, 1948 to February, 1953 were shown in Table 58.

Some of these items of special receipts need explanation. Land sold by two farm operators were sold for cash needed for loan repayment. It is perhaps worth noting that one of these two operators was in the habit of heavy drinking and had been in recent years spending about two thousand baht annually on liquor alone, while the other was in the habit of gambling. All five operators reporting sales of gold gave the reason for the sale that cash was needed to either buy farm equipment (buffaloes) or to repay

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 333]